

Rev^d. M^r. Rand
Mary Tarrant Book 1780
4487. K. 4.

Mr. Skute's
ELECTION-SERMON,

MAY 25th. 1768.



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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY

FRANCIS BERNARD, Esq;
GOVERNOR,

HIS HONOR

THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Esq;
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR,

THE HONOURABLE

His MAJESTY'S COUNCIL,

AND THE HONOURABLE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Of the Province of the

Massachusetts-Bay in New-England,

MAY 25th. 1768.

BEING the Aniversary for the ELECTION of His
MAJESTY'S COUNCIL for said PROVINCE.

B Y

DANIEL SHUTE, A. M.

Pastor of the Third Church in HINGHAM.

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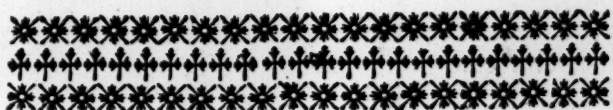
Province of MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

In COUNCIL, 26th May, 1768.

ORDERED, That ISAAC ROYALL,
BENJAMIN LINCOLN, and ROYALL
TYLER, Esquires, be a Committee to
wait on the Rev'd Mr. DANIEL SHUTE,
and return him the Thanks of the
Board for his Sermon preached Yester-
day, before the Great and General
Court, being the Day appointed by
the ROYAL CHARTER for the Election
of Councillors for the Province ; and
that they desire a Copy of the same for
the Prefs.

A. OLIVER, Sec'y.





A N
ELECTION SERMON.

E Z R A X. 4.

ARISE ; for this matter belongeth unto thee ; we also will be with thee ; be of good courage, and do it.

HE, whose happiness can admit no accession, and whose perfect rectitude excludes every degree of malevolence, must design the happiness of those creatures he calls out of nothing into existence ; to suppose the contrary is inconsistent with absolute perfection, and implies the worst of characters.

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6 *An Election-Sermon.*

THE communication of happiness being the end of creation, it will follow, from the perfections of the creator, that the whole plan of things is so adjusted as to promote the benevolent purpose ; to which the immense diversity in his works ; the gradation in the species of beings that we know of, and many more perhaps than we know of, and the somewhat similar gradation in the same species, arising from their make, their connections, and the circumstances they are placed in, are happily subservient. And every creature in the universe, according to its rank in the scale of being, is so constituted, as that acting agreeably to the laws of its nature, will promote its own happiness, and of consequence the grand design of the creator.

AGREEABLY hereto, all beings in the class of moral agents are so formed, that happiness will result to them from acting according to certain rules prescribed by the creator, and made known to them by reason or revelation. The rules of action, conformity to which will be productive

ductive of happiness to *such* beings, must be agreeable to moral fitness in the relation of things ; in perfect conformity to which the rectitude, and happiness of the creator himself consists. And such is the connection and dependency of things, that happiness will result from conformity to these rules, not only to individuals, but likewise to the whole ; for the beneficial effects of such conformity are reciprocal.—It naturally tends to promote the order and harmony of the moral system, and so the general good.

THE plan of the creator being thus manifestly adapted to promote the happiness of his creation, his conduct herein becomes a pattern to his creatures that are rational moral agents, and the rule of their duty, according to their measure ; for all moral obligation on such, indubitably, arises from the will of God, as there is so exact a coincidence between his will, and the relative fitness of things ; so that the nearer they resemble him, the nearer they will come to the perfect standard of right action, and the nearer they come

3 *An Election-Sermon.*

to *this* the more happiness will be produced.

IT being so evidently the will of God, from the general constitution of things, that the happiness of his rational creatures should be promoted, all such are under moral obligation in conformity thereto, according to their ability, to promote their own, and the happiness of others.

THE nature of the human species, therefore, being so adapted to society as that society will afford vastly more happiness to them, than solitary existence could do, indicates the will of their creator, and makes it morally fit that they should associate. From the make of man, the disadvantages of a solitary, and the advantages of a social state, evidently appear. A state of separation from the rest of the species will not admit the exercise of those *affections and virtues*, in which, from his natural constitution, his happiness very much consists; but in connection with others there will be opportunity for the exercise of them. As
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each individual living in a sepearte state would be preventive of the happiness for which men were evidently formed ; and as this happiness can be obtained only in a social state, to form into society must be not only their interest, but their duty.

THE instinct, or propensity, implanted in the human species leading them, as it were mechanically, to *that* to which they are morally obliged, is an instance of the creator's goodness as it facilitates the performance ; and in the same proportion it does so, must make their neglect the more inexcusable.

MANKIND being formed into society, the moral obligation they are under to civil government will appear from the same principle, as being necessary to secure to them those natural rights and privileges which are essential to their happiness. Life, liberty, and property, are the gifts of the creator, on the unmolested enjoyment of which their happiness chiefly depends : yet they are such an imperfect set of beings that they are liable to have
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these invaded by one another: But the preservation of them in every fit method is evidently their duty. The entering into society lays the foundation of a plan for securing them; but this plan will be incomplete without the exertion of the united power of the *whole* for their mutual safety. The exertion of this power for that purpose, correspondent to the everlasting rules of right, is what is, here, intended by civil government; and as this is a method the best adapted, in their power, to secure the rights and privileges necessary to their happiness, to go into it is morally fit, and evidently the will of their creator.

WHATEVER mankind are obliged to perform must be within the verge of their power: The impracticability of the human species continuing to be one society for the purpose before mentioned, makes it necessary and fit they should form into distinct and separate societies, and erect civil government in them for that end.

UPON the same principle, still, the natural

tural rights of one society being invaded by the superiour power of another, so long as the former are unable to assert their freedom, it is morally fit they should receive laws from the latter tending to their happiness, as being the best means in their power to promote it, rather than admit a state of anarchy, big with *confusion and every evil work* : But from these circumstances it is morally fit they should rescue themselves whenever it is in their power, only it may be as fit to use caution, that by such attempts they do not plunge themselves the deeper into distress.

THE obligation mankind are under to civil government, in some form, as essential to their happiness in the present state, and perhaps not without its influence upon their happiness in a future, is not only deducible from the natural constitution of things, but also supported by written revelation ; in which it is represented as greatly tending to their *good*, and therefore an ordinance of the great benefactor of the world, whose *tender mercies are over all his works*. In the epistle to the
Romans,

Romans, the civil power is expressly said to be *of God*, to be *ordained* of him, and the civil ruler to be *the minister of God for good*.

THE line, indeed, between one society, and another, is not drawn by heaven; nor is the particular form of civil government; as whether it shall be conducted immediately by the whole society, or by a few of their number, or if by a few, who they shall be, expressly pointed out; but, as mankind are rational and free agents, these are left to their determination and choice; only herein they are restricted by those rules which arise from the moral fitness of things productive of the general good, which they are ever bound invariably to observe.

NOR does the sacred story of the *Hebrew* polity militate against the established order of things relative to civil government among men. The theocracy of the Jews, was an extraordinary vouchsafement of God to that particular nation, but not counter to, or designed to alter, the general constitution of mankind.

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THE right the supreme ruler of the world has to bestow favours upon *some*, out of the common course of things, while *others* are left in the enjoyment of their natural privileges, can, in reason, no more be doubted, than his right to create one being superiour to another ; for, though unknown to us, *that*, as well as *this*, may be in the original plan for the communication of happiness.

THE ecclesiastic, and civil polity of the *Jewish* nation, being under the immediate direction of God himself, was not only a signal favor to them, but also designed to answer very important purposes in his government of mankind.

THEIR civil polity coincided with the fitness of society, and civil government among men, in all their salutary effects ; but the extraordinary manner, in which it was conducted, was never exhibited as a pattern to the other nations of the earth ; but they were still left to judge for themselves, as to the form of civil government, within their power, that
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might be most subservient to the public good.

THAT this peculiar form among the Jews was not designed to be perpetual appears probable, from the particular directions early given, by *Moses* the servant of the Lord, to regulate the administration of a king that should, from among, themselves, in future time, be set over them ; and also by the revolution that in process of time ensued by more than the divine permission. After which the civil state of the Jews symbolized with the civil state of other nations.

THE Deity's condescending to be, in a political sense, king in Israel, being a signal favor to them, as hereby they had a civil government better adapted to their circumstances, and better contrived to promote their welfare, than they could have had by all the wisdom of man, it must have been impiously ungrateful to reject him in that character, and desire that one of the imperfect sons of men should be their supreme ruler ; and therefore deserving

serving the severe reprehension given them, by the prophet, under the direction of God himself.

BUT though their inadvertent and rash desire was such an ungrateful resignation, and just forfeiture of the special favor they enjoyed, that God saw meet to discontinue it, and to chastize them for their wickedness therein, yet he did not withdraw the protection and blessing of his providence from them in the exercise and enjoyment of the rights and privileges common to human nature. And if the alteration made at their desire, the extraordinary vouchsafement of the Deity apart had not been agreeable to the natural constitution of mankind, and fit in the relation of things, it is not easy to conceive how he should so far countenance the thing as to be active in setting kings over them : And not only direct them in their choice, but also prescribe rules for the regulation of such an office, and express his approbation of, and afford his blessing to those who formed their administration according to them.

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THE difference between them, now, and the other nations seems chiefly to have arisen from their religious state ; which indeed had still some kindly influence upon their civil. In the exercise of their natural constitutional rights relative to civil government, it was no doubt fit to seek direction from him by whose providence kings reign. Their expectation of immediate direction from heaven was founded on the peculiar gracious dispensation they were under ; and therefore the like could not be expected by any other nation.

No set of beings can, in reason, suppose themselves wiser than their maker ; but must think *that* to which he directs to be wisest and best ; and, therefore, when they have certain notice of his pleasure respecting any transaction of theirs, both duty and interest urge them to a compliance. And what nation of men on earth, in the exercise of this natural right, unalienable to any mortal, would not be glad of immediate indubitable direction from heaven ? But when the
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these special directions are not obtainable, as according to the natural constitution of mankind they are not, the affair being so important to society, and the happiness of the whole so intimately connected with it, it is fit that they should first implore the influence of providence, which may be real, though not immediate and sensible ; and then transact it in the exercise of that liberty wherewith the creator has made them free.

EZRA's advancement to the government over the Jews did not, indeed, originate from their election, but from the civil power of that nation to which they were then in subjection ; but yet, as their circumstances would not admit of their exercising all the rights of a free state, it became fit that they should chearfully acquiesce in that appointment to promote their happiness, as it was the best method in their power.

THEY were now emerging from the lowest state of depression ; for seventy years they had been unable to break the

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iron yoke of captivity, and to assert their national freedom. But under the favor of *Cyrus* part of the nation had returned to their own land, and were laying anew the foundations of *the commonwealth of Israel*. Their dependence on a foreign power, not only for permission to return to the land of *Palestine*, but also for protection in the re-settlement of it, made it evidently their duty to submit to a deputation from that power, with a view to promote their welfare.

AND *Ezra's* being sent from the *Per-
sian* Court, with ample commission to settle affairs among them, ecclesiastic, and civil, according to their pristine form, was no doubt highly agreeable to them, as he was of their own nation, and his qualifications were so adequate to the important trust, for he was a ready scribe in the law of *Moses*, and well understood the magna charta of their constitution; and also as he was a man of great piety, and virtue, and ardently disposed to advance the interest of his nation: Who therefore could be more welcome,
who

who more likely to put things into a proper situation, and to promote the welfare of the community, the only worthy end of government?

THE kind reception he met with appears, in part, from the early application made to him respecting illegal marriages in vogue among them, to which, the words I have read immediately refer.—The story shows how ready he was to exert himself for their good; his known character points out his qualifications for the purpose; and the united efforts of the people with him, to this end, with an acknowledgement of his authority, are expressed in the text: *Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee, and we will be with thee; be of good courage, and do it.* And if we may be indulged to take this instance as a specimen of Ezra's general administration, and of the people's friendly spirited assistance through the whole; and as we go along to notice his distinguished character; the way will be open to turn our attention—to the part of civil rulers—to the qualifications of such—

and to the neceſſity of the united exertions of the people with their rulers, to answer the ſalutary purpoſes of civil government.

AND FIRST, The part of civil rulers, in general is to keep in view the end of civil government, and of their own particular advancement, and to act accordingly.

THOUGH in the conſtitution of things it does not belong to man to live alone, or without government in ſociety; yet he is inveſted with certain rights and privileges, by the bounty of the creator, ſo adapted to his nature that the enjoyment of them is the ſource of his happineſs in this world, and without which exiſtence here would not be deſireable. And mankind have no right voluntarily to give up to others thoſe natural privileges, eſſential to their happineſs, with which they are inveſted by the Lord of all: for the improvement of *theſe* they are accountable to him. Nor is it fit, that
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any of the sons of men should take from others *that* which they have no right to give, nor by their misconduct have forfeited; though in this case there should be mutual consent, the compact would be illegal, and both parties indictable at the bar of heaven.

CIVIL government among mankind is not a resignation of their natural privileges, but that method of securing them, to which they are morally obliged as conducive to their happiness: In the constitution of things, they can naturally have no rights incompatible with this; and therefore none to resign. For each individual to live in a separate state, and of consequence without civil government, is so pregnant with evil, and greatly preventive of that happiness of which human nature is made capable, that it could never be designed as a privilege to man by the munificent creator: And, perhaps, is not a privilege to other orders of rational creatures, as much superior to man, in virtue, as in rank of being.

MANKIND may naturally have a liberty to live without civil government in the same sense that they have a liberty, *i. e.* a power to neglect any moral duty : But they are evidently made dependent on one another for happiness ; and that method of action, which in the constitution of things, will prevent misery, and procure happiness to the species, on supposition of their being acquainted with it, and in a capacity of going into it, is not only wrong in them to neglect, but even duty indispensable to pursue. From hence arises their obligation to civil government as mentioned before ; and when the same reason urges the lodging this government in the hands of a few of the number associated, the same obligation lies on them to do so.

A COMMUNITY having determined that to commit the power of government to some few of their number is best, the right the some few can have to it, must arise from the choice of the whole ; for in this state the government belongs to the whole, and one has no more right to

to govern than another ; the right therefore that individuals can have to this must be delegated. This delegation is not indeed the giving away of the right the whole have to govern, but providing for the exercise of their power in the most effectual manner.

It is by virtue of the previous consent of society as being best, that government may devolve on some by succession, and that others may be appointed to rule by those already in authority.

A COMPACT for civil government in any community implies the stipulation of certain rules of government. These rules or laws more properly make the civil constitution. How various these rules are in different nations is not the present enquiry ; but that they ought in every nation to coincide with the moral fitness of things, by which alone the natural rights of mankind can be secured, and their happiness promoted, is very certain. And such are the laws of the constitution of civil government that we, and all

British subjects are so happy as to live under.

THE rectitude of the laws of a civil constitution are of more importance to the well-being of society than the particular form of administration, but that form which is best adapted to secure the uninterrupted course of such laws is most eligible, and herein also we outvie other nations.

THOSE laws which prescribe the rights of prerogative, and the rights of the people, should be founded on such principles as tend to promote the great end of civil institution ; and as they are to be held sacred by both, it may be supposed, ought to be as plain as the nature of the thing will admit : Mysteries in civil government relative to the rights of the people, like mysteries in the laws of religion, may be pretended, and to the like purpose of slavery, *this* of the souls, and *that* of the bodies of men.

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THE design of mankind in forming a civil constitution being to secure their natural rights and privileges, and to promote their happiness, it is necessary that the special end of the electors in chusing some to govern the whole, should be assented to by the elected to vest them with a right to govern, so far at least as to direct the administration, without which they are indeed vested with no authority; for the being chosen to a particular purpose by those in whom the right of choice is, can give no rightful power to act beside or counter to this purpose. And therefore to the proper investiture of any in the office of civil rulers to which they are chosen by the people, it is necessary they should consent to act the part for which they are chosen; and this sets them in the high office of government, and gives them authority to regulate the whole.

THEIR consent to take the office to which they are chosen by the community lays rulers under a moral obligation to discharge the duties of it with fidelity.
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And if for the greater security of society, they who are thus introduced into office are bound to the faithful discharge of it by the solemnity of an oath, their obligation hereto is the greater.

WHAT is right in the relation of things, and which has the general consent of mankind, being the rule of civil government in a well constituted state, civil rulers are to be so far from invading, that they ought to be the guardians of the natural and constitutional rights of their subjects; which are here supposed to be so nearly the same that there is no interfering between them. To form a civil constitution otherwise would be to establish iniquity by law.

THE various duties of their office then centre in one point, the end of their election, and that is to promote the public welfare.

MINUTELY to enumerate these duties is not indeed pretended, not only as it would take up too much time, but also

also as the wisdom of the politician can better apply general rules to particular cases as circumstances vary ; I therefore shall take the liberty only in a more general way to observe : That whatever is injurious to the community, whether foreign or intestine, is theirs to endeavor to prevent. In this state of imperfection and sin, particular societies are liable to injuries from one another, hence vigilance becomes one part of the duty of civil rulers ; to this they are more obliged than other men : In office they are as eyes to the political body, the proper use of which is necessary to its safety. It is no small part of their care to descry danger, to penetrate the designs formed abroad to the detriment of the community. And as they are set for the public defence, when such dangers are discovered by them, it is their part to provide against them at the public expence ; which must be in their power at all times, or at some times it may not be in their power to act in the character of guardians to the public. Individuals of the same society are likewise liable to unequal treatment from one another,

another, which also claims their attention. They are to rescue the weak and helpless, the widow and fatherless, from the cruel hands of oppression, and equally secure to all, high and low, their rights.

AND whatever is for the advantage and emolument of society, is also their part to promote, not only barely to secure to their subjects the cardinal privileges of human nature, but also kindly endeavour to heighten their happiness in the enjoyment of them. Those methods which will be most conducive to the preservation and prosperity of the *whole* are to be studiously devised, and faithfully urged by them ; hence agriculture and commerce, liberal and mechanical arts should be encouraged, as pointed out in providence for the benefit of mankind ; in proportion to improvement in which will be the benefit resulting from them, by which a supply may be obtained not only for necessity, but also for delight ; and hereby their political strength will be increased, and they become more able to support the common cause. The wealth
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of the people is the strength of the state ; and therefore, as *the diligent hand maketh rich*, they should reduce the vagrant, and call the idle to labor, and all to industry in their respective callings, so essential to the public utility.

BUT *wisdom is a defence* as well as *money*, and necessary to the well being of a community. The education of the youth is therefore carefully to be provided for ; that hereby such improvements may be made, as happily tend to abate the ferocity of uncultivated nature, to soften the temper, and give a high relish to the sweets of social life ; and such genius's may be formed as public offices require ; that the *people*, in church, or state, may not be *destroyed for lack of knowledge* ; but *wisdom and knowledge may be the stability of the times*.

THE civil power also should be exerted to suppress vice as pregnant with mischief to society ; and to support virtue as the foundation of social happiness.

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THAT public homage which the community owe to the great Lord of all ; and which is equally their interest as their duty to pay, should be earnestly promoted by their rulers. The fitness of which reason dictates and revelation confirms, as a proper expression of the dependence of mankind on him, and of their grateful sentiments towards him, *who giveth to all life and breath and all things* ; and also as the way more deeply to impress on their minds a sense of their obligations to conform to his will ; conformity to which will produce order and harmony, and qualify for the blessings of his providence.

THE great advantages accruing from the public social worship of the Deity may be a laudable motive to civil rulers to exert themselves to promote it ; and will have an influence on them who have the public good at heart, as well as a proper sense of duty to him, *who is higher than the highest* : In this way, while the ministers of religion are under the patronage of the civil power, the people will be instructed in those principles, and urged to those

those practices, which will greatly subserve the interest of the community, and facilitate the end of government.

EZRA's commission extended to church as well as state ; and there is indeed such a connection between them, and their interest is so dependent upon each other, that the welfare of the community arises from things going *well* in both ; and therefore both, though with such restrictions as their respective nature requires, claim the attention and care of the civil rulers of a people, whose duty it is to protect, and foster their subjects in the enjoyment of their religious rights and privileges, as well as civil, and upon the same principle of promoting their happiness.

IT is therefore the part of civil rulers to make, and as occasion shall offer, to execute such laws as tend to promote the public welfare. *These* indeed are in some measure to be varied, according to the temper and circumstances of the subjects, by the wisdom of the legislators ; but yet it is necessary there should be in them

a conformity to the immutable laws of nature, to answer the true design of civil institution.

To these laws it is fit they should add such sanctions as will give them energy if they are suitably applied by those in civil office whose part it is to put the laws into execution.

PROVIDED always, that no laws be made invasive of the natural rights of conscience, and no penalties inflicted by the civil power in things purely religious, and which do not affect the well being of the state: In *these*, every man has an unalienable right, in the constitution of things, to judge for himself: No man, and no number of men therefore have a right to assume jurisdiction here.

ON the free exercise of their natural religious rights the present as well as future happiness of mankind greatly depends; the abridgement of which by penal laws is evidently incongruous to the eternal rules of equity; but these rules
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are never to be violated in the exercise of civil power. Civil laws, of right, can relate only to those actions which have influence on the welfare of the state ; and to all *such* the subject may be urged by the civil authority consistently with that freedom of mind, in judging of points of speculation, and that liberty of conscience relative to modes of worship, which he has a natural right unmolested to enjoy.

OBLIGATION on civil rulers to secure the rights and promote the happiness of the people, most certainly implies a power in them to that purpose,—to make laws and execute them ; without which, ruler is but an empty name : To this purpose they are indeed cloathed with authority, and armed with the united power of the community ; only in the exercise of this power they are under the same moral restrictions with those by whom it was delegated to them.

As in a well constituted civil state there is a subordination among rulers, and each has his respective part to act
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with a view to the public good ; so to carry the grand design into execution it is necessary that each should keep the line of his own particular department ; every excentric motion will introduce disorder and be productive of mischief : But each keeping a steady and regular course in his own sphere, will dispense a benign influence upon the community, and harmoniously conspire to promote the general good : As in the solar system, every planet revolving in its own orbit round the sun produces that order and harmony which secures the conservation of the whole.

THE part that civil rulers have to act supposes qualifications for that purpose, and accordingly we have begged leave in the SECOND place, from the distinguished character of *Ezra* to suggest some of them.

RELIGION, learning, and firmness of mind in the discharge of the duties of his office, were conspicuous parts of his character, and comprehend perhaps most of the qualifications requisite in civil rulers.

RELIGION

RELIGION includes piety and virtue, and is acting agreeable to the will of God according to the capacity of the moral agent. To *this* all men are under obligation as they would answer the end of their creation, and qualify themselves for the happiness for which they were formed : And to *this* they are obliged in their social connections, that the happy effects of it may be felt not only by themselves but also by others. Nor is there any station among mankind so elevated as to free from this obligation.

THE public good is in proportion to right action in every individual.—But as in the civil subordination among men *some* have it in their power to do more *good* or *mischiefs* to the *whole* than others, so it is of more importance to society that *such* should be virtuous than others. There is an essential difference between virtue and vice, and their different consequences to society will be sensibly felt : nor is it in the power of earth, or hell, to alter the natural constitution of things.

VICE is detrimental to society in some
C 2 degree

degree in *any* of its members, but is more so in *those* who manage the public affairs of it. It disqualifies for public services at the same rate, as it debases the mind, weakens the generous movements of the soul, and centres it's views in the contracted circle of self-interest.

BUT virtue qualifies for public offices as it dilates the mind with liberal sentiments, inspires with principles of beneficent actions, and disposes to a ready compliance with the apostolic injunction, *look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of another.*

THE religion of Jesus is designed to *destroy the works of the devil, to bring men from darknefs to light, from error to the truth, and from the power of satan unto God—*It inspires the mind with a sacred regard to God, and with benevolence to men,—it is an imitation of his example, *who came down from heaven and went about doing good, —of his, who is good to all, and whose mercy endures forever—*and it also more powerfully inforces all moral obligations, as it illucidates a future state of rewards and punishments.

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THAT character therefore which is formed from those principles, which are abhorrent to sinister views, and indirect measures to promote a man's own private interest, and lead to generous godlike actions diffusive of goodness to mankind, and which afford the strongest motives to such actions, evidently corresponds to a public station, and is most likely, *ceteris paribus*, to discharge with fidelity the duties of a civil post.

NOR is the influence, the example of rulers will, in high probability, have upon others, unimportant to society : Facts demonstrate examples to be very forcible on human nature. Inferiours especially are apt to copy the pattern set them by superiours, and too often even to servile imitation. In some proportion then as the example of those who are in exalted stations is virtuous or vicious it may naturally be expected the character of the *whole* will be : Nor is sacred history silent as to the influence public characters have had upon the morals of a people ; in this view therefore it is the wisdom and interest of a community to pre-

fer the virtuous to the vicious for their rulers.

BUT the goodness of the heart influential on the life, without discernment in the heart, will yet leave evil rulers short of a qualification necessary to discharge the duties of their office. Men may be pious and virtuous and yet not capable of penetrating very far into the nature and connection of things, and therefore unequal to transactions which require more than common abilities.

THE natural and acquired accomplishments of mankind are various, all answering good purposes in their respective situations, and subservient to the general good ; and in proportion to *these* they are qualified for different employments. Of *Ezra's learning* particular notice is taken in his commission for *government*, as qualifying him for the important post. And something corresponding hereto in all civil rulers is undoubtedly requisite in their several departments ; I mean a capacity of discerning the nature and duties of their office, and how to perform them.

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It is not indeed of so much importance how they come by their qualifications, whether by *less* or *greater* application, as that they are really possessed of it; on *this* in no small degree the welfare of society depends. Those posts, to perform the duties of which distinguishing abilities, clearness of understanding and soundness of judgement are required, cannot be filled to advantage by *those* in whom *these* are wanting; if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch. In this fluctuating uncertain state, the community will, at particular seasons more especially, need *wise men* for *pilots*, to save the threatened bark from surrounding gaping ruin. The weighty and multifarious concerns of state require *great* and *extensive* abilities to steer the *whole* in that channel which will terminate in the public security and emolument.

CAPACITY for posts of public trust without virtuous principles is indeed precarious, and not safely to be depended on; but when probity and wisdom unite in the same person they form a character that tends greatly to support the confi-

dence, and secure the happiness of the people.

BUT to *these* we may yet add firmness of mind in the execution of their office as a very necessary qualification in civil rulers, without *which* an habitual disposition to do their duty, and the good sense to understand it, may not in all circumstances answer the end. The necessity of *this* is supposed by *Shechaniah* when he says to *Ezra* in the text, *be of good courage, and do it.* And was exemplified by *that ruler* in his administration,

THE present state of things will afford frequent occasions of trying the virtue as well as the wisdom of rulers.—Like other men they are exposed to temptations, and perhaps to more and greater than others ; and human nature at best is very imperfect. The temper of domination so strongly interwoven in the make of man may induce them to a wanton exercise of the power reposed in them. Flattery by its soothing addresses and artful insinuations may insensibly divert them from a right course, and lead them

them to dispense the blessings of government with a partial hand. Calumny and cruel censure may provoke in them too great resentment, or subject them to that *fear of man* which *bringeth a snare* : Firmness of mind is therefore necessary to repel *these* and a thousand other temptations—to suppress every undue swell of the soul, and to urge the spring of action, that they may pursue with steadiness and vigor the great end of their office.

THOSE noble exertions of mind which a due administration requires clearly evinces the necessity of this temper in civil rulers : As in order hereto the art of self-denial must be learned and frequently practised by them ;—a prevailing attachment to their own private interests and gratifications be given up to the public—angry resentments be tempered down to the standard of right action, — their ease superseded by incessant labors, and sacrificed to the benefit of others.

SOFTNESS and timidity of mind indulged into habit will weaken resolution, and relax the nerves of effort in the most
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trying seasons, and perhaps betray the cause their office calls, and their virtue inclines them to support. But firmness and fortitude of soul arising from principle, and cultivated with care, will not easily admit those sordid views that lead *supinely* to neglect, or *tamely* to surrender the interest of society, but enable them to comport with personal inconveniences, and stand firm amidst the severest trials, in executing the duties of their office.

Good may indeed be done by him, who is *distinguished* by one of these qualifications alone, and more especially in his connections with others employed in the same office; their different qualities may operate in subserviency to each other, and by their mutual aid lead into measures conducive to the general safety; and happy to mankind that in this imperfect state it is so! But without determining which of them being wanting in civil rulers would be of most dangerous consequence to society, it is very certain their meeting in the same person forms a character that will best answer the design of such promotion; and the more there
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are of this character among them, the more likely it is that the public welfare will be promoted.

BUT, if every good quality should meet in civil rulers yet **THIRDLY**, the united exertions of the people with them are necessary to answer the salutary purposes of civil government.

A COMMUNITY having delegated to some of their number the power of civil government as a method of exercising that power the best adapted to secure their natural rights and promote their happiness are not at liberty to counteract the method, but under obligation, in every fit way, to support it ; and indeed without their exerting themselves to this purpose, their rulers, however well qualified, will be unable to answer the end of their advancement.

THE cause in which rulers and ruled are engaged is the same, though the parts they have to act are different ; *these* all tend to one grand point, the welfare of the

the community ; and people are as much obliged to fidelity and ardor in the discharge of their duty, as rulers to theirs, in supporting the common cause.

THE discharge of the duties of civil office merits an adequate reward from them whose business is done thereby ; and the community are unquestionably obliged to see that business performed. Rulers devoting their time and their talents to the service of the public entitles them to an easy and honourable support : For real service and great benefit done them, it is the duty of the *people* to render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, and custom to whom custom. If this should not be afforded *them* by the public, they could not attend *continually* upon the duties of their station, and of consequence civil government, on which so much depends, could not be upheld to advantage.

A RESPECTFUL treatment of their rulers is also due from the people, and greatly conducive to the end of civil institution. *They* are raised to exalted station by the *people*, under the governance

ance of his providence, who wills the happiness of *all men*, and in promoting which they are to be considered as his vicegerents executing his will, and therefore worthy of esteem and veneration. Their success in administration also very much depends upon this respectful deportment toward them: To pour contempt upon rulers is to weaken government itself, and to weaken government is to sow the seeds of libertinism, which in a soil so prolific as human nature, will soon spring up into a luxuriant growth; nor will it be in the power of rulers to stop the growing mischief, or, to keep things in a proper situation, without, the concurring aid of the people.

A SACRED regard to civil authority, according to the true design of it, is to be cultivated in all; and as a means naturally tending to this, including the necessity of divine influence in their arduous and benevolent work, it is directed by the supreme law-giver, *that supplications, and prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made—for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a*
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quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

To keep up veneration for rulers, is to keep up a regard to government itself in the community, and to open the way for its happier influence. Honor therefore should be rendered to them to whom it is due for the good services they have already done, and as being the way to give them opportunity of doing more, and to stimulate them to improve the opportunity by the vigorous exertions of their abilities to that purpose.

BUT still and more especially, the united efforts of the people with their rulers are necessary to the putting those laws into execution that are made for the good of the community.

It is here supposed, that the laws made by civil rulers coincide with moral fitness, and are calculated to answer the end for which only they are impowered to make laws ; if otherwise, the subject can be under no obligation to observe them ; but may be morally obliged to resist

sist them, as it must ever be right *to obey God rather than men.* The doctrine of *passive obedience* and *non-resistance* in the unlimited sense it has been urged by some, came not down from above, as it can be supported neither by reason nor revelation, and therefore if any where, may be urged with a better grace by *the rulers of darkness*, in the regions below, upon those who by the righteous decree of heaven, are excluded the common benefits of creation, than by those *powers that are ordained of God* for the good of mankind. But though with the highest propriety this doctrine may be exploded, it does not at all lessen the moral obligation of obedience in the people to an equitable administration; and to use their endeavours that the laws made by their rulers to promote the good of the community should take place to that purpose: This is only the continued exertion of that power which is necessary to carry into effect the plan of civil government laid by themselves, and without which the best laws will fall short of it. There may be *good laws*, and *faithful* executors of them, and yet such a practical combination of the subjects as in
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some measure frustrate the happy effects of them : The violation of *these* laws may be so connived at in one another, as to prevent the executors having the opportunity to suppress them. The laws of the supreme legislator of the world are unquestionably *just and good*, and yet are transgressed by daring mortals every day : And though under his all-discerning eye the impenitent shall not finally escape with impunity, yet the transgressors of human laws founded on the same principles as the divine, may illude the inspection of man and the force of his laws : And when this practice shall become general in civil society, the energy of government will of course be relaxed. Nor can it be in the power of rulers the best qualified and the most sedulously attentive to the duties of their office to prevent it, unless they were gods in a higher sense than the scripture intends by giving them that title, and were able not only to make *good* laws, but also to inspire their subjects with a principle of obedience to them.

IT is therefore plain, that the united efforts of the people are necessary to support civil government, and make it efficacious to the great and happy end for which it was instituted : And as rulers are holden by the strongest ties to consult and endeavour the welfare of the people ; the *people* are equally bound to aid and assist them in these endeavours.

WHAT has been imperfectly suggested in this discourse may lead to some reflections on the goodness of the supreme ruler of the world, to mankind in general and to ourselves in particular, in the present state, more especially as expressed in the institution of civil government : And give occasion to urge the attention of rulers and people to the duties of their respective stations.

THE goodness of the Creator appears through all his works, but more illustriously to man than to any other creature on this earth ; him he hath set at the head of this part of his creation : The place of his present abode is accomoda-

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ted to his necessity and pleasure ; and his mind is endowed with reason and understanding to guide and regulate him in the enjoyment. With a view to secure him in the possession of the munificence of his creator, he is directed by instinct and reason to associate, and amicably unite the strength of individuals for the defence and safety of the whole.

AND this method is peculiarly adapted to the present depraved state of mankind, in which by leaping the bounds of right man is the greatest enemy to man. If there was no such thing as civil government among them, what ravages ! and what depredations would there be ! This earth would be the habitation of cruelty, and a field of blood. The consequences of perfect anarchy among mankind would be more unhappy and mischievous to them, than if *the foundations of the earth were out of course, the sun should be darkened, and the moon not give her light, and the stars fall from heaven ;* And the natural order of this system should be interrupted by a general and most ruinous confusion.

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BUT the plan of civil government, as included in the constitution of things, and obvious to the common sense of mankind, well executed by them, gives such a check to *evil doers*, and support to *them that do well*, that the nearer mankind pursue it, in its true intention, the more this earth will become a habitation of peace, of security and happiness. This privilege is put into their hands by the Lord of all, as the great security and completion of their earthly felicity ; to him therefore their united acknowledgements should like incense, with fervor ascend.

WE ourselves have reason, not only to join in the universal tribute, as partaking of the blessings of the creator in common with mankind, but also in particular to express our warmest gratitude to him whose providence determines *the bounds of the habitations of all the nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth* ; that we live under a constitution of civil government the best adapted to secure the rights and liberties of the subject : The fundamental laws of which are agreeable to the laws of nature resulting from the relation

of things, worthy of men and christians; and the form of administration the best contrived to secure a steady adherence to those laws in the exercise of civil power. Our King sways the sceptre in righteousness, and *his throne is upholden by mercy*: The legislative and executive powers are guided by the same laws.

THE beneficial effects of the happy constitution extend to the remotest parts of the *British* empire: *Britons* exult in the enjoyment of their natural rights under its auspicious influence, nor less the colonists in *North-America* while they participate with grateful and loyal hearts the like blessings from the same source.

THE colonists indeed on account of local circumstances, have been indulged to form into little distinct states under the same head, and to make laws and execute them, restricted at the same time by the laws and dependent on the supreme power of the nation as far as it is consistent with the essential rights of *British* subjects and necessary to the well-being of the whole. And this is so far from being
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the ground of their complaint that it is in their opinion the very foundation of their happiness ; from the antient stock they delight to draw nutrition as hereby they flourish, and in their turn bear to *that* proportionable fruit. Nor could any thing more sensibly affect them, or be thought of with more regret, than to be rescinded from the body of the empire, and their present connections with *Great-Britain*.

IN their little depedent states they have long enjoyed her parental smiles, which has greatly increased their attachment to her : The relief she has kindly afforded them in times of danger and distress will always invigorate the addresses, and support the confidence of her children towards her, under the like circumstances, till they shall find themselves discarded by her. Which sad catastrophe may all-gracious Heaven prevent ! But the same patronage is still to be hoped for by the colonists while they do nothing to forfeit it. Nor is it to be thought that *Great-Britain* would designedly enslave any of her free-born sons, and thereby break in

upon that constitution so friendly to Liberty, and on which her own safety depends.

THIS Province has not the least share in privileges derived from the civil constitution of her parent country, and which are amply secured to us by royal charter.

OUR Governor is by deputation from our most gracious Sovereign as the representative of his sacred person in our provincial model of civil government. His Majesty's paternal care in this respect is most readily acknowledged by us, as the Gentleman who has this honor at present is well acquainted with the laws and formalities of our civil constitution, and has abilities equal to the important post. Whose presence forbids every thing that looks like adulation, but may admit of the warmest wishes for his happiness in this world and the next.

THE other two branches of the legislature are chosen by the people, either immediately by themselves or mediately by their representatives, which coincides with the freedom of the *British* constitution,

tion, and we shall always esteem as a pledge of the Royal favor.

THE return of *this day* is auspicious to our civil liberties, and fills every honest heart with joy. The liberty of chusing men from among ourselves, whose interest is inseparably connected with the *whole*, for his Majesty's Council in the province, whose part is not only to aid the power of legislation, but also "freely to give advice at all times to the Governor for the good management of the public affairs of government," will always be considered as a privilege *dear* and *sacred* by all who are not, by blind prejudice or sordid views, lost to a sense of the inestimable value of their natural and constitutional freedom.

THE election of so important a branch of the legislature will naturally gain the attention of those who are concerned in it. Fidelity in the discharge of the trust reposed in them, and a regard to the welfare of the province will determine their choice. All personal piques, and personal friendships, and private interests will be laid aside upon this interesting occasion. And
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while the public good is kept in view, qualifications for a place of so much weight and influence in government will be chiefly regarded.

WE rest assured in the good opinion we have of the Electors, that they will divest their minds of every wrong *byass*, and will not take those who neither *fear God*, nor *regard man*; who have no steady principles of action to be depended upon, unless those that lead them to break through the the highest moral obligation, and to live as *without God in the world*: and in whose minds private interest evidently turns the balance against the public. Not those who are unfriendly to learning, who at the most have only taken the intoxicating draught at the *perian* spring, but have not drank so deep as to open their eyes and give them a just discernment of things, who in their patriotic phrenzy would deprive church and state of the the means greatly conducive to the well-being of *both*. Nor yet the pusillanimous who would not dare to speak their minds in their Country's cause in trying seasons, and are only fit for a private station.

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THEIR virtue and wisdom will fortify them against artful addresses and wily intregues in this important transaction. A just concern for the interest of their country will lead them to prefer those qualities and accomplishments which are most likely to promote it, and to give their suffrages for men evidently possessed of them to sit at the Council-Board the ensuing year.

AND may all, who by the people under God are advanced to posts of civil power and trust, attend to the true design of their advancement, and with fidelity and incessant ardor pursue it.

The *matter* which *belongeth* unto them being altogether interesting to us, as every thing dear in this world is connected with it, we surely may be allowed to hope for an *upright* and *wise* management of it, and as the task is arduous, and attended with various and great trials, to press them by every consideration to *be of good courage, and do it.*

AND no motives to urge them to patriotic

triotic efforts are wanting.—The neglect of their duty, or that which is worse the counteracting the grand design of their office, by indirect methods, they will be able to answer, neither to their country, to their own conscience, nor to *God the Judge of all*; for not only the present, but future generations also, will feel the unhappy consequences, and execrate the authors of what they feel. Their consciences will give them trouble at certain periods, but especially at the near approach of the decisive day, when all their dignity will forsake them, and they will appear in their real worthless character, and creep *into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth for fear of the Lord*, to shelter themselves from that vengeance which yet will inevitably light on their devoted heads. On the other hand, the diligent, the faithful and intrepid execution of the duties of their office, will make them benefactors to the people at present, and transmit their names with honor to posterity, who, in futurity, will participate the blessings. And *such* conduct will afford to their mind a satisfaction that nothing can equal short of the

the plaudit of their judge ; who will not forget their *labor of love*, but amply reward their services for mankind, and as they have *been faithful over a few things* he *will make them rulers over many things*.

THE happiness of THIS PEOPLE in the enjoyment of their natural rights and privileges under providence is provided for by their being a part of the *British* empire, by which they are intitled to all the privileges of that happy constitution ; and also by the full and ample recognition of these privileges to them by charter.

THEIR civil constitution as the basis of all their temporal felicity is their dearest stake. Every privation of their natural rights is subversive of their happiness, and every infringement of the form of their constitution has a tendency to such privation : The preservation of their constitutional rights, in every fit method, will therefore ever forceably claim their attention ; and to this purpose, while they are awake to a sense of their interest, the vigilance and care of their rulers will,

will, of right, be earnestly expected by them.

THEIR being dependent on the supreme power of the nation as a part of the *whole*, is so far from making it unfit to remonstrate under grievances of this nature, that it is a reason why they should do so; when by the constitution every subject has an equal claim to protection and security in the exercise of that very power.

THEIR being loyal subjects to the best of Kings, whom may God long preserve! and disposed to cultivate, and if possible to increase their loyalty, will always incline his gracious ear; and give weight to their petitions with his parliament.

WITH indifference to surrender constitutional rights, or with rashness to oppose constitutional measures, is equally to *rebel* against the state. Anarchy and slavery are both diametrically opposite to the genius of the *British* constitution, and indeed to the constitution of the God of nature; and equal care at least is to be taken

taken to avoid the former as the latter. A ready compliance with constitutional measures will always justify a tenacious claim to constitutional privileges, and support the hope of their continuance.

THE welfare of the province, at all times, demands the attention of the guardians of our natural and civil rights; to this purpose the legislative and executive powers are to be exercised. But laws are useless in a state, unless they are obeyed; nor will putting the executive power into the best hands avail to the designed purpose, if there is not proper application made to it upon those occasions that require the exercise of it; for in proportion to the want of this application the most excellent *code* of laws will be a dead letter. It is necessary in the nature of the thing, and indispensably obligatory upon the people to unite their endeavours with their rulers to give life and energy to the laws in producing the designed happy effects.

WE have good laws; and magistrates appointed to put *those* laws into execution,
whose

whose fidelity may not be impeached : What therefore seems to remain to complete our political happiness is the exerting ourselves to aid the civil power, in suppressing every thing that may be detrimental, and in promoting that which may be of advantage to the *whole*.

THOUGH *some* are appointed and bound by oath to give information of breaches of the law which come within their knowledge, yet *all* are under certain obligation to assist in conveying such information through the proper channels to the executive power, as it is the *ordinance of God* for the good of the community. But from the want of a due regard to the public—or from a misguided fondness for ourselves, we are too apt to be criminally indulgent to one another, and of consequence to desert the magistrate, and in some degree frustrate the design of his office. We have laws *wisely* provided against the evils of *idleness* and *intemperance*—and whatever has appeared to the wisdom of the legislature to be hurtful to society ; to whom then may the increase of such disorders be attributed?

ted? to *those* whose business it is to execute the law upon offenders, on due information, or *those* who rather than give such information chuse to have *fellowship* with iniquity:—But not only they who are specially appointed for the purpose, but *all* should attend to the moral obligation they are under to exert themselves, in their respective stations, to prevent the interruption of the happiness of society, and instead of leaving the magistrates unaided, should voluntarily *rise up* for them *against the evil doers*, and lend their assistance to bring *the workers of iniquity* to condign punishment.

By this general exertion the most happy effects would be produced;—transgressors would soon be taught a greater reverence for the law, and all be more secure in the enjoyment of their rights: Hereby obstructions would be removed, and the executive power have free course; and judgment would *run down as waters* and righteousness as a mighty stream.

INSTEAD therefore of speaking *evil of dignities*, and cruelly charging them with
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the blame of prevailing disorders, we should recriminate on ourselves, and do our part to aid the magistrates in putting the laws *already* made into execution, and confide in the wisdom and fidelity of the legislators to make such *new ones* as the circumstances of the community may require.

AND while the guardians of **THIS PEOPLE** are intent upon securing their rights and promoting their happiness, in every wise and laudable method, liberal support should be granted, great honors done, and chearful obedience yielded to them.

OUR safety and happiness must always arise from the united exertions of rulers and ruled to the same salutary purposes. The security of our liberty and property by the fundamental laws of our civil constitution is the strongest motive to maintain an inviolable attachment to it; and to exert ourselves to promote the interest of the nation to which we belong. Every well-directed effort to support the constitution on which the happiness

ARBITRARY and oppressive measures in the state would indeed dispirit the people and weaken the nerves of industry, and in their consequences lead to poverty and ruin ; but a mild and equitable administration, will encourage their hearts and strengthen their hands to execute with vigor those measures which promote the strength and safety of the whole.

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tive to such efforts ; and may be justified by the principle of self-preservation : But the advantages of such improvements will not be confined to ourselves—the more populous and opulent we grow, the more able we shall be to defend this important part of the *British* dominions—the more our nation will be a terror to her enemies—and the better able shall we be to make remittance for what we shall necessarily want of her manufactures.

By a proper attention to the general interest, and vigorous pursuits of measures that tend to promote it, things may be put into such a situation as to be of mutual advantage. The growth and prosperity of her colonies must be of real advantage to *Great-Britain*.— The means for exportation being increased in them, will be so to the colonies, by which they may sink their present heavy debts, and more easily defray necessary public charges.

THE same attention, with a little prudence, would lead us to retrench extravagant

vagant expences, and to promote frugality, good order, and industry, that we might give a seasonable check to increasing debility, enjoy what we possess to more advantage and widen the foundation of future felicity. Under greater advantages we may receive monitory and directive hints, by turning our eye to the provident ant, *which having no guide, overseer or ruler provides her meat in the summer and gathereth her food in the harvest.*

WE are now reaping the happy fruits of our Fathers *hard* labor and *ineffable* sufferings ; and shall not a concern for future generations warm our hearts—produce some acts of self denial, and closer application for their sakes ? or shall we do nothing for our *posterity* when the first renowned settlers, here, did so much for *theirs* ? Could *they* look down—or rather be permitted in flesh to visit their dear-bought country, with what astonishment would they behold the ungrateful neglect—with what severity reprove the prostitution of patrimo-

nial privileges, and chide the criminal want of philanthropy, in their degenerate offspring: and with what ardor would they urge them to perfect the work they had nobly begun, and thereby make room for millions yet unborn quietly to enjoy their natural, their civil, and religious liberties.

IN fine. To secure his own, and to promote the happiness of others, is the part of every one in this great assembly. *To this end were we born, and for this cause came we into the world.* We were placed in that rank of being, and under those circumstances, which the infinitely wise and good Creator saw proper. And as we are moral agents, and accountable; it is of great importance to us in every station, to keep in view the *end* of our being called into existence.

THIS is but the bud of being—we are candidates for a succeeding state; into which, we are assured by the *gospel* of the Son of God, the consequences of our actions in *this*, will follow us. Nor in
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the constitution of things have we long to continue here, but mortality will soon translate us to the state of retribution. With what care then should we avoid every action debasing to the mind, and with what assiduity pursue those that tend to raise it to nobler heights.

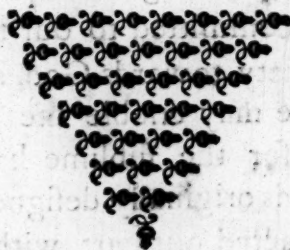
By inattention and vice we may forfeit the blessings of *creation* and *redemption*, and by a continued course of sordid and unworthy actions, dishonorary to God and unfriendly to mankind, we may finish the ruins of our nature; and put ourselves into such a state, that it would have been *good* for us if we *had never been born*. But by a diligent improvement of the talents committed to our trust in exercises of piety towards God, and charity to men, we may enoble the mind, and qualify it for the sublime happiness for which it was originally designed. Having therefore acted our part with fidelity in the service of God and our generation, we shall quit this imperfect state with dignity and honor, and rise superior to the highest grandeur and felicity in these regions

An Election-Sermon.

regions of mortality ; and by the immerited munificence of the Creator
walk —
High in Salvation, and the Climes of Bliss.*

* MILTON.

THE END.



B R R A T A.

- Page 35, Line 2. read, agreeably.
Page 38. Line 5, for heart read head.
Page 39, Line 2, read this qualification.
Page 46, Line 3, read a veneration.
Page 48, Line 1, read to frustrate.